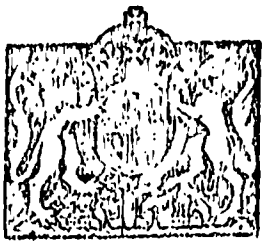

Annual Report on the Working of the Backward Class Department 1937-38

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ANNUAL REPORT ON THE WORKING OF THE BACKWARD CLASS DEPARTMENT FOR 1937-38.

No. B.C. 3170 OF 1938.

Poona, 6th August 1938.

From

C. S. DEVADHAR, Esquire, B.A.,
Backward Class Officer,
Bombay Province, Poona;

To

THE SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT,
General Department, Bombay.

Subject.—Report on the working of the Backward Class Department for the year 1937-38.

Sir,

I have the honour to submit the Administration Report on the work of the Backward Class Branch of this Department, for the year ending 31st March 1938.

Charge.

2. The charge of the Backward Class Officer was held by Mr. D. Symington, I.C.S., up to 2nd November 1937, when he proceeded on special duty to investigate into the conditions of the Bhils and other Aboriginal and Hill Tribes in the Partially Excluded Areas. Mr. W. B. Gilligan held charge of the post from 3rd November 1937 to 9th February 1938. Thereafter the charge was held by me for the remainder of the year.

The charge of the Assistant Backward Class Officer, Northern Circle, Ahmedabad, was held by Mr. S. Benjamin, B.A., LL.B., up to 31st October 1937 except for a period of one month when he proceeded on privilege leave and Mr. P. H. Eden, Office Superintendent, acted in his place. On Mr. Benjamin's reversion to the Revenue Department on 1st November 1937, the charge was held by Mr. A. Noronha, B.A., on deputation from the Revenue Department, up to the end of the year. Mr. G. B. Shitole held charge as Assistant Backward Class Officer, Southern Circle, Dharwar, throughout the year. I held charge of the post of

the Assistant Backward Class Officer, Central Circle, Bijapur, up to 8th February 1938. Thereafter this charge was held by Mr. G. B. Shitole in addition to his own of the Southern Circle, Dharwar.

Classification of Backward Classes.

3. The list of Backward Classes classified as "Scheduled Castes", "Aboriginal and Hill Tribes" and "Other Backward Classes" issued under Government Resolution, General Department, No. 9330, dated the 3rd December 1934, remained in force during the year.

Primary Education of Scheduled Castes.

4. The following table gives information relating to the number of Backward Class pupils, teachers, etc., as required by paragraph 23 of the Report of the Depressed Classes and Aboriginal Tribes Committee of 1930 :—

	1936-37.	1937-38.
Pupils.		
(*i*) Scheduled Castes—		
(*a*) Attending common schools ...	61,667	60,928
(*b*) Attending special schools ...	16,050	13,649
Total ...	77,717	74,577
(*ii*) Aboriginal and Hill Tribes ...	28,668	30,366
(*iii*) Other Backward Classes ...	33,749	42,011
Total, Backward Classes ...	140,134	146,954

Teachers (in Government, District Local Board and Municipal Primary Schools).

Scheduled Castes ...	Men ...	927	1,004
	Women ...	90	107
	Total ...	1,017	1,111
Aboriginal and Hill Tribes ...	Men ...	315	342
	Women ...	18	22
	Total ...	333	364
Other Backward Classes ...	Men ...	415	408
	Women ...	47	48
	Total ...	462	456
Total, Backward Classes ...	Men ...	1,657	1,754
	Women ...	155	177
	Total ...	1,812	1,931

(*i*) The above figures go to prove that there has been an improvement in most respect. The number of Scheduled Caste children attending common schools has slightly fallen. There has also been some fall in the number of Scheduled Caste children attending separate schools which is mainly due to the closure of some of the separate schools maintained for them and to the fact that in the latter part of the year under report some agitation against the admission of Harijan children into the common schools was carried on in some of the districts, particularly in the Northern Division. There has, however, been an appreciable rise in the *total* number of Backward Class children under instruction as well as in the number of Scheduled Caste as well as Backward Class teachers working in the common and special schools.

(*ii*) In view of the amendment effected in the Primary Education Act, whereby the supervision of the Primary Schools has been taken over by Government and the measures that have been adopted since to ensure that admission is not refused to a Harijan child on the score of caste it is hoped that progress in this direction will be speedier in the future and that discrimination against the Scheduled Castes will soon be a thing of the past.

(*iii*) The six night schools started by the Backward Class District Committee, Sholapur, two years ago have continued to work efficiently. These schools impart instruction in the regional languages to adults belonging to the Depressed Classes. About 200 Depressed Class students took advantage of these schools. These schools receive annual grants-in-aid from the Municipal Borough, Sholapur.

Differential treatment of Scheduled Caste Children in Schools.

5. There still appear to be a few cases of disabilities in regard to common seating arrangements of the Scheduled Caste children especially in schools which are held in temples. As already pointed out in the last year's report it is the primary duty of the School Boards to take immediate steps to shift such schools from the temples. Such cases will gradually vanish if the School Boards concerned evince a keener interest in the matter.

Secondary, Collegiate and Technical Education.

6. The Backward Class students who were certified to be poor by the Head Masters of the schools concerned continued to be exempted from payment of room rent in the hostels attached to Government Secondary Schools.

According to the orders contained in Government Resolution, Educational Department, No. 1413, dated the 30th March 1937, 75 per cent. of the Backward Class pupils on the rolls on 1st July 1936 are to be awarded free-studentships in Government Secondary Schools. Government in Government Resolution, Educational Department, No. 1413 of 14th June 1937 have ordered that girl students of the Backward Classes studying in Government

Secondary Schools should continue to be admitted free if they can show that they are unable to pay fees. In accordance with the revised orders of Government in the Educational Department issued under No. 3464, dated the 24th September 1937, 20 per cent. of places are reserved for Backward Class students in Government Secondary Schools other than the Anglo-Urdu Schools.

In addition to the scholarships awarded by the Educational Department monetary help to deserving students from the Backward Classes studying in Secondary Schools and Colleges by way of scholarships and in lump sums was awarded by this Department in consultation with the Director of Public Instruction or the Educational Inspectors concerned. The total amount expended in this manner during the year was Rs. 2,930. Such help was given to the students who were genuinely in need of help to enable them to prosecute their further studies.

Government under their Educational Department, No. 6374, dated the 26th November 1937, sanctioned scholarships to 13 of the Scheduled Caste students in Colleges who were not in receipt of special scholarships; 33 of the Depressed Class students in non-Government Colleges were awarded full remission of fees for the second term. Some 20 students reading in the Government Arts and Professional Colleges who were not in receipt of free-studentships were granted full free-studentships. Scheduled Caste students in Government secondary schools were also given free studentships.

Government also sanctioned grants aggregating to Rs. 5,000 to the tanning schools.

A sum of Rs. 6,000 was distributed amongst the Provincial Harijan Sevak Sanghs for carrying on their educational activities amongst these classes. The institutions working for the uplift of the Aboriginal and Hill Tribes in the Partially Excluded Areas, viz., (1) The Bhil Seva Mandal, Dohad, (2) The Dang Seva Mandal, Baglan, District Nasik, and (3) the Bhil Sudhara Samiti, Dhulia, also received a Government grant of Rs. 3,000 in all, for conducting their activities amongst these tribes.

Three Scheduled Caste students studying abroad were given scholarships amounting to Rs. 4,000 by Government. A non-recurring grant of Rs. 400 was also sanctioned to the Union Boarding House, Poona, for providing accommodation and requisite equipment for the College students in Poona.

These were some of the special measures adopted by Government during the year under report with a view to encourage education amongst the Scheduled Castes.

7. An amount of Rs. 438 was distributed in scholarships to poor Backward Class students receiving technical training in various institutions. One Scheduled Caste girl undergoing the nursing course in the Civil Hospital at Belgaum continued to be paid a monthly scholarship of Rs. 15. This scholarship will be continued to her till she finishes her course.

Admission of Backward Class teachers to Training Colleges.

8. Information pertaining to the admission of Backward Class teachers to the training institutions for the year 1937-38 has been obtained from the Educational Inspectors and the progress so far achieved is tabulated below :—

Serial No.	Division.	Total Number of teachers admitted in Training Colleges.	Total Number of Backward Class Teachers admitted.	Total Number of Scheduled Caste Teachers admitted (included in the preceding column).
1	Northern Division ...	93	10 or 10·7 per cent.	6
2	Bombay Division ...	39	6 or 15·4 „	4
3	Central Division ...	425	73 or 17·1 „	51
4	Southern Division ...	89	17 or 19·1 „	7

The position in all the divisions excepting the Northern Division is satisfactory. It is hoped that attempts in the Northern Division will be made by the local bodies to send up a greater number of Backward Class teachers for training so as to bring it into line with the other divisions of the Province.

Depressed Class Hostels.

9. The Government Depressed Class Hostel at Poona continued to work satisfactorily during the year. Depressed Class boys belonging to all the Marathi-speaking districts take advantage of this hostel for prosecuting their studies in Secondary Schools. There is a common messing arrangement and all Depressed Class boys dine together. During the year as many as 60 inmates were admittted to the Hostel.

The number of privately managed Depresseed Class hostels that received Government grants-in-aid increased from 17 to 29 during the year under report, as shown in the sub-joined statement.

Serial No.	Name of the Hostel.	Grants paid during 1937-38.
		Rs. a. p.
1	Depressed Class Hostel, Ahmedabad	1,334 0 0
2	Depressed Class Education Society's Hostel, Thana ...	2,558 0 0
3	Depressed Class Education Society's Hostel, Dharwar ...	1,602 0 0
4	Karnatak Education Society's Hostel, Belgaum ...	396 0 0

Serial No.	Name of the Hostel.	Grants paid during 1937-38.
		Rs. a p.
5	Boarding House for Pawari boys, Mahad	355 0 0
6	Shri Shahu Chhatrapati Boarding House, Satara ...	1,260 0 0
7	Bahishkrit Anath Vidyarthi Ashram, Sholapur ...	1,260 0 0
8	Depressed Class Mission Society's Hostel, Bombay ...	417 0 0
9	Asprushyodharak Boarding House, Chalisgaon ...	460 0 0
10	Shri Choka Mela Boarding House, Jalgaon ...	300 0 0
11	Shri Shahu Chhatrapati Depressed Class Hostel, Nasik .	382 0 0
12	Poona Seva Sadan Depressed Class Hostel, Poona ...	312 0 0
13	Ambedkar Anath Vidyarthi Ashram, Manmad ...	180 0 0
14	Union Boarding House, Poona	198 0 0
15	Kakkaya Samaj Boarding, Nipani	360 0 0
16	Katkari Hostel, Wada	720 0 0
17	Hostel for Tadvi Bhils, Yaval	250 0 0
	New Hostels.	
18	Karnatak Harijan Balikashram, Hubli	1,116 0 0
19	Rajendra Harijan Hostel, Dhulia	540 0 0
20	Harijan Ashram, Viramgaon . ..	468 0 0
21	Harijan Ashram, Nipani	540 0 0
22	Harijan Hostel, Amalner	324 0 0
23	Gandhi Ashram, Godhra	324 0 0
24	Harijan Ashram, Kaira	360 0 0
25	Harijan Hostel, Jamner	324 0 0
26	Harijan Student's Hostel, Bijapur	1,620 0 0
27	Harijan Vidyarthi Vasati Grih, Barsi	504 0 0
28	Harijan Vidyarthi Nilaya, Byadgi	756 0 0
29	Harijan Sevashram, Ahmednagar	612 0 0
	Total ...	19,532 0 0

N.B.—Besides the above grants-in-aid sanction on a *per capita* basis, a sum of Rs. 12,164 was distributed among the Provincial Harijan Sevak Sanghas, Institutions catering for the Bhills and Aboriginal Tribes in partially excluded areas and other institutions for Scheduled Castes for providing educational facilities, medicines, etc.

In addition a sum of Rs. 1,000 was distributed amongst the Depresssed Class Hostels for books, medical aid, general help, etc., *pro rata* to the number of students in them.

These hostels are not exclusively meant for the Scheduled Caste students; they are also open to poor Backward Class students and it is hoped that more students from the Aboriginal and Hill tribes will take advantage of them.

A special additional grant of Rs. 1,200 was paid by Government to the Shree Shahu Chhatrapati Boarding House, Satara, since it is a model institution and does commendable work. Here one can see the touchable as well as the untouchable students freely moving and dining together, cooking their food in turns, no distinction whatsoever being observed. This institution serves as an example for the others to follow in dealing with the question of eradicating untouchability.

As the authorities in charge of the Depressed Class Hostel at Ahmedabad were unwilling to run the hostel due to financial stringency the management of the institution has been entrusted to the Gujarat Harijan Sevak Sangh and Government have promised an annual grant-in-aid of Rs. 5,000 to that body.

Recruitment to Public Services.

10. The standing orders of Government for recruitment to the Public Services as summarized in the last year's Administration Report remained in force during the year. The progress made in this direction is encouraging. Government have also been issuing orders from time to time to the Heads of Offices directing them to see that the instructions contained in these orders are strictly observed. One of the main activities of this Department is to render aid to Backward Class candidates in securing employment in the various Government Offices. Registers of candidates from amongst the Backward Classes seeking employment in Government service continued to be maintained in the main office as well as in the offices of the Assistant Backward Class Officers. In accordance with the orders of Government lists of Backward Class candidates are being supplied twice annually to the Heads of Departments as observed in the last report. They are also supplied to all recruiting officers on demand but it needs to be impressed upon all appointing officers that this does not absolve them from the responsibility of finding out themselves suitable Backward Class candidates either by enquiry or by advertisement in local newspapers of the posts to be filed so that the quotas fixed by Government may be fully reached in course of time.

It is sometimes observed that apppointing officers are not strictly following the schedules of classification inasmuch as it is noticed that some of the candidates actually coming under the Intermediate Classes are employed under the mistaken notion that they are from the Backward Classes. To prevent such errors it is suggested that officers while making appointments should strictly

adhere to the schedules of Backward Classes printed as an accompaniment to Government Resolution, General Department, No. 9330, dated the 3rd December 1934.

Information regarding the number of Backward Class candidates during the year under report for whom positions were secured in the various Government offices through the agency of this Department is given in the subjoined table.

Qualification.	Backward Classes other than Schedule Castes.	Scheduled Castes.	Total.
1. Graduate	2	.....	2
2. Matriculates	19	24	43
3. Primary School Final ...	12	9	21
4. Non-qualified	4	46	50
Total ...	37	79	116

This excludes a number of cases wherein Backward Class candidates applied directly to the various appointing authorities and secured appointments.

Training of Backward Class candidates in Office Procedure.

11. Two Backward Class candidates were entertained in this Department on a monthly scholarship of Rs. 12 to learn office routine. Both these have now secured appointments in Government service. This sort of training is found to be very useful in preparing Backward Class candidates for entry into Government service.

Experiments in Housing Sites.

12. Mention was made in the last year's Report of the development of housing sites for members of the Backward Classes in the following places.

Akluj and Barsi in Sholapur District, Sholapur and Vadula Budruk, Shevgaon Taluka, district Ahmednagar.

(*a*) *Akluj in Sholapur District.*—The plots are intended to be given to Depressed Classes as well as to Criminal Tribes licensees. Six plots have up till now been granted to Depressed Class members and 10 plots to Criminal Tribes licensees.

(*b*) *Municipal land for Bhangis' chawls at Barsi.*—The Municipality has resolved to spread murum, etc., and to lay out roads on the site. The Municipality has further resolved to construct one or two rooms there and to grant them on lease at a nominal rent to the Scheduled Castes. The Bhangis will have a prior claim to the rooms that will be constructed by the Municipality.

(*c*) *Panjarpole Mang Colony at Sholapur.*—The layout of plots for the Mang Colony has been duly approved by the Consulting Surveyor to Government. A large plot of ground in the old Judge's Court compound has also been reserved by the Municipality for the use of the Depressed Classes. The layout of the site was prepared by the Municipality and the plots will soon be made available for these classes.

(*d*) *Vadula Budruk, Shevgaon Taluka, district Ahmednagar.*—As the present Maharwada is subjected to the floods of the Nani river it is proposed to acquire one acre and eight gunthas of land for housing the Mahars. The land acquisition proceedings in this connection are in progress and will soon be completed.

(*e*) A piece of land consisting of 45 plots, each measuring 40′ × 40′, has been specially reserved for the Scheduled Castes at *Hotgi in Sholapur District.*

(*f*) At *Indi, Bijapur District,* 13 plots have uptil now been granted to the Scheduled Castes from plots on the Criminal Tribes licensees' free colony at an occupancy price of Rs. 7 per plot.

(*g*) *Bijapur.*—A plot of land out of Survey No. 976 of Bijapur City has been reserved for providing housing sites for the Scheduled Castes and this piece of land has been laid out into 70 plots of which 10 are now assigned to these classes.

(*h*) *Dharwar District.*—Land measuring 5 acres and 32 gunthas out of C. T. S. No. 69, Military Ground, Dharwar, is divided into 130 plots of which 66 are assigned to the Scheduled Castes till now. Houses on 15 plots have been built.

Seventeen out of the 19 plots in City Survey No. 17 of Dharwar have uptil now been disposed of to members of the Scheduled Castes; of these, 14 plots have been used for buildings.

A site measuring 2 acres and 10 gunthas in City Survey No. 35 of Hosayellapur for housing the Chhapparbands has been divided into 60 plots of which 35 have been disposed of; on 11 of these plots houses have been constructed.

All the plots in City Survey No. 131 have been assigned to the Scheduled Castes.

Survey No. 42/5 of Krishnapur Hubli was developed into 5 plots; of these 3 are now built on.

(*i*) *Kaira District.*—As the houses of the Scheduled Castes at Kathalal, taluka Kapadvanj, were situated on a small hillock which was being gradually encroached upon by deep ravines it was proposed to acquire a piece of land measuring 2 acres and 9 gunthas out of Survey Nos. 333 and 335 at Kathalal for housing these Scheduled Castes. The acquisition proceedings in this connection have been completed. The layout of plots has been carried out and the plots will soon be disposed of to the Scheduled Castes of the village.

13. Steps are being taken to provide new sites in the following places:—

Hubli.—There are about 100 families of Shikligars residing at Old Hubli on land belonging to a local gentleman paying annual rent. As these are very poorly housed it is proposed to acquire 8 acres of land out of Survey No. 70 of Ayodhya Hubli. The total acquisition cost is estimated at about Rs. 2,200. Mr. F. G. Ghodke, who is the Secretary of the non-official Backward Class District Committee, Dharwar, takes a very keen interest in the amelioration of the condition of these classes, and he has agreed to pay part of the amount since the Shikligars are extremely poor.

Gadag.—There are about 50 families of Shikligars residing in three different places. They are found to be in a deplorable condition putting up in small huts. The acquisition of a suitable site at Gadag for these people is under consideration.

Nipani, district Belgaum.—With a view to relieve the congestion in the Dhor and Chambhar localities at Nipani the Municipality has agreed to acquire 5 acres of land out of Survey No. 192 and develop it into a number of suitable plots to be sold at nominal prices to the Depressed Classes.

Sholapur.—A site in the southern portion of the city has been reserved in the Town Planning Scheme No. III for the use of the Depressed Classes and this is also likely to be made available to them in a short period.

Lands for Cultivation.

14. Applications from members of the Backward Classes for grant of lands for cultivation were forwarded to the Collectors of the districts concerned.

In the forest settlement at Janori about 162 acres and 32 gunthas of land were granted to 13 Scheduled Caste members for cultivation by the Divisional Forest Officer, East Khandesh, Jalgaon.

Water Facilities.

15. (*i*) Government under their Resolution, General Department, No. S. 92, dated the 14th September 1937, sanctioned a sum of Rs. 10,00,000 for adopting measures for improvement in village water supply. Directions have been issued that in spending these allotments the Commissioners and the Collectors should pay special attention to the needs of the Scheduled Castes especially in the districts where on account of caste prejudice these classes have not as yet been accorded full facilities in the matter of drinking water.

Apart from this, Government sanctioned during the year under report a sum of Rs. 10,000 to be spent in the Central and Southern Divisions for providing facilities for water supply to the Scheduled Castes.

(*ii*) With a view to taking stringent action to safeguard the fundamental civic rights of the Scheduled Castes Government have issued orders enjoining on all officers the necessity of dealing severely with all cases where the Scheduled Castes are prevented from enjoying their rights. In particular the following steps are to be taken.

(*a*) Award of deterrent punishment by Magistrates for the offence of fouling the drinking water of the Scheduled Castes.

(*b*) In cases where local bodies fail after due warning to erect notice boards on all public wells throwing them open to all castes and creeds, there should be a curtailment or even stoppage of the voluntary Government grants paid to these bodies.

(*c*) If a local body deliberately and persistently disregards the orders of Government in this respect Government will not hesitate to dissolve or supersede the defaulting local body and to have the obligatory duty carried out by their own agency at the expense of the said local body.

It is hoped that these orders will soon have the desired effect and the Scheduled Castes will have a free and unhampered use of all sources of public water supply all over the province.

It needs, however, to be emphasised that executive or legal action alone is insufficient to prevent caste Hindus from employing social boycott and other forms of harassments against these castes for asserting their civic rights in such matters and that enlightened public opinion and active support and co-operation from the institutions working for the uplift of these classes and from social workers are essential to achieve the object in view.

Recently there have been a few instances of these classes endeavouring to assert their rights with regard to public wells and tanks and such attempts have proved successful. This shows that the caste Hindus are gradually realising the rights of the Scheduled Caste people. As public opinion becomes more and more enlightened this long standing prejudice will disappear.

Miscellaneous Grievances of Backward Classes.

16. The following are a few of the instances of miscellaneous grievances and complaints dealt with by this Department :—

(*i*) A Scheduled Caste teacher of Por, taluka North Daskroi, district Ahmedabad, was refused admission into a bus plying for hire between Ahmedabad (Victoria Gardens) and Vavol *via* Por. The driver of the bus on being asked by the Assistant Backward Class Officer, Northern Circle, Ahmedabad, to show cause why he should not be prosecuted, regretted the incident and gave a written undertaking that he would not thereafter refuse admission to persons of the Scheduled Castes. It is now learnt that the Scheduled Castes are allowed to travel by bus unhampered.

(*ii*) As the wells meant for the Scheduled Castes at Barej, Ode and Kuber villages, taluka South Daskroi, were in a dilapidated condition the President of the District Local Board, Ahmedabad, was moved in the matter and the necessary repairs to the wells have since been carried out.

(*iii*) On a visit by the Assistant Backward Class Officer, Northern Circle, to the sweepers' quarters at Erandol it was noticed that the houses were low-roofed and had insufficient accommodation for a family to live in. The President of the Erandol Municipality was requested to redress this grievance of the sweepers and the Managing Committee has since resolved to carry out the necessary repairs to these houses.

(*iv*) At Sarani Bhagol Moholla, Surat District, it was noticed that Scheduled Caste persons were greatly inconvenienced for want of Municipal public latrines in their locality. The matter was represented to the President of the Surat Borough Municipality and it is now reported that the necessary provision on this account has been included in the municipal budget.

(*v*) It was represented by the Scheduled Castes of Bhoras, taluka Chalisgaon, East Khandesh District, that one of their marriage processions was obstructed by the villagers. The Collector was requested to take the necessary steps in the matter and it is reported that the dispute has been amicably settled and the villagers have agreed not to cause such obstruction hereafter.

(*vi*) The Mahars of Hadnal, taluka Chikodi, district Belgaum, complained of forced labour being exacted from them by the village officers. This was brought to the notice of the Prant Officer who made the necessary enquiries in the matter and a list of the duties to be legitimately performed by the Mahars was drawn up and supplied to the Mahars as well as the village officers.

(*vii*) The feelings of the Mahars and the villagers of Yemanur, District Dharwar, were becoming strained as the former had refused to beat the drums and had entered the public village tank. Enquires were made into the matter and the facts were brought to the notice of the Revenue authorities with the result that the grievances of the Mahars have since been redressed.

(*viii*) The Depressed Classes of Hubli complained that they could not get water from the public taps until it was poured out to them by some well disposed persons after their needs were over. The President of the Hubli Municipality being moved in the matter, notice boards throwing the taps open to all without any distinction of caste and creed have now been put up on some of the public taps.

(*ix*) The Depressed Classes of Annigeri in the Dharwar District complained that they were not allowed to take water from the tank. The requisite notice boards have now been put up by the authorities concerned on the tank at two different places.

Non-official Backward Class District Committees.

16. The non-official Backward Class District Committees at Sholapur, Bijapur, Dharwar and Belgaum are doing good work.

The Committee at Sholapur is evincing a keen interest in adult education and in the housing problems of the Depressed Classes at Sholapur. In addition to other activities the non-official Backward Class District Committees at Dharwar and Belgaum have interested themselves in launching prosecutions under the Devadasis Protection Act X of 1934.

The work done on these Committees by Rao Bahadur Dr. Mulay of Sholapur and Mr. F. D. Ghodke of Hubli, in particular, deserves special commendation.

General.

17. (*a*) As already observed in the last year's report the cruel practice of dedicating girls as Devadasis is particularly prevalent in the Belgaum, Dharwar and Bijapur Districts of the Karnatak. This practice needs to be stopped with a firm hand since the life of many an innocent girl is sacrificed at the alter of dedication. Government have very recently issued orders directing all District Magistrates to instruct Police Patils, under section 6 of the Village Police Act, 1867, to give information of the commission of such offences to the Sub-Divisional Magistrate within whose local jurisdiction the village is situated. The Sub-Divisional Magistrate then takes cognizance of the offence or orders the police to make an investigation.

The District Magistrate, Dharwar, has issued instructions to the Magistrates in the District, subordinate to him to accept complaints lodged by the non-official Backward Class District Committee, Dharwar, and the Valmiki Nayak Sangh, Hubli, which have been exempted from payment of process fees.

Of the three cases at Ranebennur, district Dharwar, in which prosecution proceedings were instituted by this Department, two ended in conviction of the accused.

These convictions have caused a great sensation amongst the communities in which this custom prevails and it is to be hoped that they will have a salutary effect on all offenders.

The initiative taken by this Department in this direction is appreciated by the people belonging to the communities where this evil practice is found mostly prevalent and has acted as an inspiration to them to direct their whole-hearted efforts for its entire suppression.

(*b*) Co-operative Credit Societies catering to the needs of the Backward Classes have been established at Mandrup and Valsang villages in the Sholapur District. At Nipani in the Belgaum District it was noticed that the Depressed Classes were in the habit of contracting petty debts from the Pathans who charged them heavy interest and they were advised to form a Co-operative Society.

Accordingly a Co-operative Society has been started there and it is learnt that the Assistant Registrar has recommended it for registration.

(*c*) The members of this Department spare no pains whenever on tour, to advise all Backward Class people to abstain from dirty habits, to avoid drunkenness, etc., while many of their grievances are redressed on the spot by making local enquiries and advising the local people.

(*d*) The Bombay Harijan Temple Worship (Removal of Disabilities) Act, 1938, was passed during the year. It is hoped that this Act will help in the throwing open of more and more temples to Harijans for worship.

(*e*) The appointment of Mr. D. Symington, I.C.S., as Special Officer to investigate and report on the conditions of the Bhils and Aboriginal and Hill Tribes in Partially Excluded Areas was one of the important measures undertaken by Government during the year for the betterment and uplift of these sections of the Backward Classes. The Special Officer's report contains several valuable suggestions which are under the consideration of Government.

The Backward Class Board.

18. The life of the Backward Class Board constituted under Government Resolution, General Department, No. 8697, dated the 26th June 1934, expired on 31st March 1937. A new Backward Class Board was constituted under Government Resolution, General Department, No. 8697, dated the 17th November 1937, with the Honourable the Prime Minister as its President. One meeting of the newly constituted Board was held during the year and the main subjects discussed therein are detailed in Appendix I.

Finance.

19. The expenditure incurred by the Backward Class Department during the year under the budget head "47—Miscellaneous Departments—Miscellaneous—Backward Class Officer" was as follows :—

	Rs.	a.	p.
(1) Pay of establishment	1,503	0	0
(2) Contingencies	7,773	0	0
(3) Scholarships	2,930	0	0
(4) Grants-in-aid to Depressed Class hostels and contributions, etc.	31,696	0	0
	43,902	0	0
Additional amount transferred from "28-Jails, etc." on account of portion of the divisible expenditure of the Backward Class Officer and his establishment ...	33,500	0	0
Total expenditure ...	77,402	0	0

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Government of Maharashtra

on 01 February, 2020

The amount of Rs. 33,500 mentioned above includes expenditure on account of travelling allowance for members of the Backward Class Board while the expenditure on contingencies includes the amount spent for housing sites for Backward Classes and also expenditure on food charges, etc., in the Government Depressed Class Hostel at Poona.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

C. S. DEVADHAR,
Backward Class Officer,
Bombay Province, Poona.

APPENDIX I.

Important Subjects Discussed by the Backward Class Board in February 1938.

Serial No.	Subject discussed.
1.	Judi on Mahar Inam lands.
2.	Amendment of the Primary Education Rules so as to make the admission of Scheduled Caste students in schools obligatory on the lines of the Madras Elementary Education Act.
3.	Admission of Backward Class teachers into training institutions.
4.	Taking over the management of the Depressed Class Hostel at Ahmedabad by Government.
5.	Standardization of the wages of sweepers in Municipalities and providing them with work uniforms.
6.	Registration of marriages amongst the Aboriginal Tribes.
7.	Starting of a Depressed Class Hostel for girls at Poona.
8.	Leasing of forest areas now lying barren to Scheduled Castes and the Aboriginal Tribes.
9.	Liquidation of debts of the Backward Classes to relieve them from the harassment of *sawkars*, etc.
10.	Starting of cottage industries such as poultry farming, weaving, etc., for improving the economic condition of the Backward Classes.
11.	Encouragement of contractors from amongst Scheduled Castes by giving them contracts for the work of constructing village wells and roads.

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